

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 222512

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ORIGIN SS-30

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NEA - MR. DAVIES

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S/S - MR. MILLER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

USLO PEKING IMMEDIATE

DOD-ISA/NESA

SECRET STATE 222512

EXDIS, TOSEC 347, ZFF PEKING ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR/IR

SUBJECT; USS HANCOCK TASK FORCE

REF: TEHRAN 7860

1. IN RESPONSE TO SHAH'S SUGGESTED PRESS GUIDANCE (PARA 3, REFTEL), WE SEE NO NEED FOR COVER STORIES IF FOLLOWING ARRANGEMENTS SUGGESTED BY DEFENSE DEPARTMENT COULD BE AGREED:

A. REGARDING 3A, PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED TO CARRY IRANIAN AIRCREW MEMBERS ON P-3 MISSIONS. PURPOSE OF FLIGHTS WILL BE TO FAMILIARIZE IRANIANS WITH HANDLING AND PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS OF P-3 IN THE IRANIAN

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PAGE 02 STATE 222512

INVENTORY. FAMILIARIZATION TRAINING WILL BE RESTRICTED TO FLIGHTS ORIGINATING AND RETURNING TO BANDAR ABBAS AIRFIELD.

B. REGARDING 3B, THE US NAVY WILL CORDIALLY INVITE IMPERIAL IRANIAN NAVY TO SEND ONE OR MORE SHIPS TO JOIN HANCOCK TASK GROUP VICINITY 22-30N 62-00E FOR JOINT EXERCISES AS PART OF PREPARATIONS FOR EXERCISE MIDLINK 73. USDAO TEHRAN MAY CONDUCT DIRECT LIAISON WITH CINCPAC TO MAKE DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THIS, AS WELL AS THE P-3 FAMILIARIZATION TRAINING.

C. GOI AND USG CAN PUBLICLY EXPLAIN OPERATIONS, IF ASKED, ALONG FOREGOING LINES.

2. REGARDING PARA 5, WE UNDERSTAND GOI PREFERENCE TO CHARTER COMPATIBLE NON-US FLAG TANKER TO LIFT POL FROM IRANIAN PORT. THIS TYPE TANKER WILL THEN HAVE TO TRANSFER POL TO USN OILER AT SEA SINCE DIRECT REFUELING OF TASK GROUP COMBAT SHIPS BY COMMERCIAL TANKER NOT FEASIBLE. USDAO TEHRAN SHOULD WORK OUT DETAILS WITH CINCPAC OR CINCPAC REPRESENTATIVE. RUSH

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